

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A device for the protection of an electrode (4) during the resistance welding of workpieces, particularly metal sheets (6, 7), including a strip (1) placed over the electrode (4), preferably in a manner displaceable relative to the same, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the strip (1) is comprised of at least two superimposed metal strips (2, 3) made of different materials, said metal strips (2, 3) of the electrode protection strip being exclusively positively connected.

2. (Currently Amended) A protection device according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the material of the metal strip (2) facing the electrode (4) exhibits little tendency to adhering to the material of the electrode (4), and the material of the metal strip (3) facing the workpiece, particularly metal sheet (6, 7), exhibits little tendency to adhering to the material of the workpiece.

3. (Currently Amended) A protection device according to claim 1 ~~or 2, characterized in that~~ wherein the material of the metal strip (2) facing the electrode (4) is selected from the group of

ferrous metals, or an alloy having its main component selected from the group of ferrous metals, and the material of the metal strip (3) facing the workpiece to be welded, particularly metal sheet (6, 7), is made of copper or a copper alloy.

4. (Currently Amended) A protection device according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the material of the metal strip (2, 3) and, in particular, of the metal strip (2) facing the electrode (4) has a melting temperature of above 1000°C and/or a conductivity of above 1 m/(Ω*mm²).

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently Amended) A protection device according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the metal strips (2, 3) are connected by rabbeting, gluing, stamping or welding.

7. (Currently Amended) A protection device according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the metal strips (2, 3) are superimposed in a congruent manner.

8. (Original) A protection device according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 7~~ claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the metal

strips (2, 3) are arranged so as to be displaceable relative to each other.

9. (Currently Amended) A protection device according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 8~~ claim 8, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the metal strips (2, 3) are arranged so as to be displaceable at different speeds.

10. (Currently Amended) A spot-welding tool for the resistance-welding of work-pieces, particularly metal sheets (6, 7), including at least one electrode (4), ~~characterized in that~~ wherein a pressure element (9) for holding down the workpieces, particularly metal sheets (6, 7), is arranged on the electrode (4) in the region of the electrode cap (5) to prevent, in particular, process-dependent warping or arching of the workpieces, particularly metal sheets (6, 7).

11. (Currently Amended) A spot-welding tool for the resistance-welding of workpieces, particularly metal sheets (6, 7), including at least one electrode (4) and a winding mechanism for winding and unwinding a strip (1) for the protection of said at least one electrode (4), ~~characterized in that~~ wherein a pressure element (9) is arranged on the electrode (4) in the region of the electrode cap (5), which pressure element (9) includes a guide (10)

for the strip (1) and is connected with the electrode (4) in a manner movable in the longitudinal direction thereof so as place the strip in a spaced-apart relationship to the electrode (4).

12. (Currently Amended) A spot-welding tool according to claim 10 ~~or 11, characterized in that~~ wherein the pressure element (9) projects beyond the electrode in the state of relief.

13. (Currently Amended) A spot-welding tool according to ~~any one of claims 10 to 12~~ claim 10, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein means for the application of force on the pressure element (9) are provided such that the pressure element (9) exerts a pressure or force on the workpieces, particularly metal sheets (6, 7), during operation.

14. (Currently Amended) A spot-welding tool according to claim 13, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said means for the application of force is comprised of an elastic element and, for instance, a spring or an adjustment means (15).

15. (Currently Amended) A spot-welding tool according to claim 13 ~~or 14, characterized in that~~ wherein the means for the adjustment of the force exerted on the pressure element (9) are provided.

16. (Currently Amended) A spot-welding tool according to ~~any one of claims 10 to 15~~ claim 10, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein a supporting element (13) is arranged on the electrode (4), which supporting element preferably includes guide channels (14) for the reception of the strip (1).

17. (Currently amended) A spot-welding tool according to ~~any one of claims 10 to 16~~ claim 10, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the guide (10) for the strip (1) within the pressure element (9) is configured such that the strip (1) projects beyond an end face (12) of the pressure element (9).

18. (Currently Amended) A spot-welding tool according to ~~any one of claims 10 to 17~~ claim 10, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the pressure element (9) is designed in the form of a metal ring having a lower electric conductivity than the electrode (4).

19. (Currently Amended) A spot-welding tool according to ~~any one of claims 10 to 18~~ claim 10, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the pressure element (9) is designed as a sensor for the detection of the contact of the spot-welding tool (8) with the workpieces, particular metal sheet (6, 7).

20. (Currently Amended) A resistance-welding method by which two workpieces, particularly metal sheets, are welded with each other using spot-welding tools, wherein at least two electrodes are pressed against each other and powered with energy with the workpieces, particularly metal sheets, being interposed, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the contact of the spot-welding tool with the workpiece is detected by an element, particularly pressure element, movably arranged on an electrode and projecting beyond the electrode and, as such contact is detected, the pressure element is being displaced relative to the electrode until the electrode contacts the workpiece.

21. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 20, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the detection of the contact of the pressure element, ~~particularly pressure element,~~ with the workpiece is realized using electric energy to power the pressure element, ~~particularly pressure element,~~ or the strip for the protection of the electrodes guided within the pressure element.

22. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 20 ~~or 21,~~ ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the detection of the contact of the pressure element, ~~particularly pressure element,~~ with the workpiece is effected mechanically.